

CHRISTIAN MONITOR.

Price \$ 2 per Ann.) Printed by JOHN WARROCK. (Paid in advance.

VOL. II.] Richmond, (Va.) Saturday, August 2, 1817. [NO. 24.

DOMESTIC INTELLIGENCE.

Extracts from the 4th Report of the Bible Society of Virginia.

THE Bible Society of Virginia has been enabled to contribute five hundred dollars to the national institution, since our last report. Besides this, several of our sister societies in this State have made considerable donations; so that Virginia upon the whole, has afforded no contemptible support to the American Society.

It affords us great pleasure to announce, that, within the last year, several new societies have been organized within our state, all of which, it is believed, are auxiliary to the American society. And we cannot forbear expressing the hope that the interest in this cause will extend, until in every part of the country zealous allies shall be found pouring their stores into the treasury of our Lord, and thereby making many rich in the gifts of eternal life.

It is known to this society that some zealous and able missionaries had translated the scriptures into the Chinese language for the purpose of distribution among the immense population of that empire. This most important work was greatly embarrassed for the want of money to carry on the printing of the translation. A call was made on the liberality of American christians; and, with exultation we mention it, in a very short time, upwards of \$ 4000 were raised for the aid of this most worthy attempt. The Bible Society of Virginia, out of its scanty means, afforded one hundred dollars for this object. It is due to the benevolence of some ladies in Richmond to mention that they, unsolicited, contributed \$ 195 for the same charity.

The managers, having been informed that a worthy missionary of the Baptist society had the opportunity of distributing bibles among the Roman catholics in the lower part of Maryland, and that they were willing to receive them, gladly embraced the opportunity thus offered, and directed fifty bibles to be placed at the disposal of the missionary.

Besides these, there have been distributed gratuitously in the course of the year one hundred & ninety bibles & forty testaments.

190	40
There have been sold to auxiliary societies and others, - 230	241
<hr/>	
Making in the whole, - - - - - 420	281
Total of Bibles and Testaments, - - - - -	701

which have been issued during the year. This, added to the amount of distributions stated last year, makes the whole number, issued since the commencement of the society, 5682 Bibles and Testaments.

The managers with peculiar pleasure inform the members, that a great impulse has been given to the Bible cause in our country during

the last year. In the preceding report it was stated that the number of Bible Societies in the United States was one hundred and ten. It is believed that there are now more than two hundred, of which far the greatest number are auxiliary to the American Society. In a short time this will be the case, there is reason to believe, with all. We shall then present the glorious spectacle of a great confederacy of christian associations, having in view one simple and sublime object, the illumination of the world. The united exertion of national talents, the contribution of national resources, the co-operation of all hands, and the fervent aspirations of all hearts, not for warlike glory, not to trample on the right of others, to deprive children of their fathers, and mothers of their sons, but to afford instruction, to communicate comfort, to wipe away tears, to inspire joy, to open the prison doors, and let the oppressed go free, presents a spectacle of moral grandeur, before which the pomp of worldly greatness, and the splendor of conquest fades as the taper in the brightness of the meridian sun. To this glory our country is now aspiring. We the people are engaged in these lofty designs. And that which was a year ago expressed as a wish, to be vouchsafed perhaps to posterity, is just now about to be realized. The accumulating treasures of the American Bible Society will soon enable it to extend the gift, fraught with all the riches of heavenly mercy, to the benighted nations. Our ships will go to every sea freighted with treasures, of more value than the gold of Ophir, or the fine linen of Egypt, and will bear home the thanks and the blessings of those who, with us, are, in this way, made partakers of the gospel of the grace of God.

While the managers with feelings of peculiar pleasure contemplate the progress of the Bible in our own country they rejoice to observe the prosperity of the same cause in other parts of the world. The British and Foreign Bible Society, as appears from their last report, and extracts published since that report was read, is pursuing its glorious course, dispensing blessings from Britain to Japan, and contributing most materially to the diffusion of the gospel among all the people, and kindred and tribes under heaven.

The Russian Bible Society has had a most astonishing growth. In age an infant, it seems at once to have sprung up to maturity, and adult vigour. Already has it published the holy Scriptures in sixteen different languages; and, with continually augmenting resources, and continually increasing zeal, is furnishing the scriptures to multitudes who never before possessed this heavenly gift. This society from its local situation possesses immense advantages of doing good, and seems to have the disposition to use them in the most efficient manner. A great part of Asia, and of Turkey in Europe, will in all probability be indebted to this noble institution for the everlasting gospel of our blessed God and Saviour.

It is known that Bible Societies now flourish in every Protestant country in the world. They are encouraged too among some Catholics in Switzerland and Germany. France, Spain, Portugal and Italy, it is believed, know nothing of this benevolent institution. With these exceptions, the christian world may be said to be united in one grand

Bible Society. Thirteen years ago, the institution was proposed by an itinerant Calvinistic Methodist, and a Baptist preacher, both then obscure individuals; and, now, empires and kings, with their great men and nobles—yea, empires, kingdoms, and states-men of all ranks and conditions, are engaged in the holy cause. Twelve years ago, the fund devoted to this charity amounted to a few hundred pounds: thousands after thousands are now with joyful alacrity poured into this sacred treasury. "This is the Lord's doing; and marvellous in our eyes." Nothing perhaps ever appeared more chimerical than the idea proposed by a few obscure men to supply the world with Bibles. Yet the plan now bids fair to be fully realized. "The word of the Lord has free course and is glorified." Nation after nation is engaging in the divinest work of charity that has ever occupied the hearts, or employed the hands of the children of men. And God most manifestly gives tokens of his favour. This world, so full of ignorance, so covered with guilt, so exposed to divine wrath, will be illuminated, regenerated, redeemed. Inspired prophets have foretold it; God has promised it; and our eyes are now beholding, our ears now hear, what prophets and kings in vain desired to see and hear. If we do not witness the day of Millennial glory, we behold its dawns; if we do not witness the fulfilment of the prediction, we have received the earnest, the pledge that it will be fulfilled. It is well worthy of remark, that, as soon as christians of all names united in the scheme for the promotion of the faith, the Almighty smiled on their efforts; and gave tokens of his approbation, such as have not been witnessed since the primitive glory of the church was obscured. No cause so prospers as that of Bible Societies. This may and does afford a salutary lesson to christians of every name and nation.

It may also be noticed, that, although the princes and nobles of the earth afford their aid, and, thus verify the prediction that "Kings should become nursing fathers and Queens nursing mothers to the church," yet, in a particular manner, in every country, this work is the work of the *people*. They chiefly supply funds; their counsel directs, their zeal executes. Here then is one high and holy purpose, exciting a deep common interest among all the nations of Christendom, and drawing within its sphere of influence one division, and then another, of the great family of man. The religious intercourse of different people, and of different churches, is now becoming as common as commercial or political correspondences are, or ever have been. Thus, Bible Societies are forming a common bond of union, among all nations; a golden chain to bind together in christian affection all parts of the world. This reminds us of the prophecy, that in the latter day "swords should be beaten into ploughshares, and spears into pruning hooks, and men should learn war no more." Let it please God thus to prosper this cause, and ere long, every man will be taught to recognize every other man as his brother, and all will worship together the common father of all the earth, offering the incense of fraternal love to heaven.

SUNDAY SCHOOL ANECDOTE.

From the London Evangelical Magazine.

A benevolent gentleman in the vicinity of London, was induced to visit a poor woman who was sick. When he entered the room, he perceived a little girl kneeling at her bedside, who immediately withdrew. He then inquired, who that child was. The sick woman replied, "Oh! sir, it is a *little angel*, who frequently comes to read the Scriptures to me, to my great comfort, and has just now given me six pence." On further inquiry, he found she was one of the girls belonging to a neighbouring Sunday School.

On the following Sabbath, our friend paid a visit to the school, and expressed a wish to speak to the child. She approached with trepidation, when he asked her, if she knew the poor woman just referred to, and had been to read the Bible to her? She replied that she had. He then asked, what had induced her to do so. She answered, "Because, sir, I find it said in the Bible, that pure religion, and undefiled before God and the Father is this—to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, &c."

"Well," said he, "and did you give her any money?" "Yes Sir." "And where did you get it?" "Sir, it was the reward given me in this school."

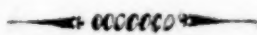
The gentleman, who related this fact, said (alluding to the expression of the sick woman,)

"I clasped the *little angel* in my arms, and prayed that the latter part of the text she quoted might also be accomplished in her—that God would "keep her unspotted from the world."—(*James, i. 27.*)

We would make use of the feeling which the foregoing anecdote must excite in the bosom of every reader, to commend to their care and attention, as well as their good wishes, that most benevolent and useful institution the Sunday School. Among the sparse population of the country we are afraid that in general, the children of both poor and rich parents will employ the sabbath, in hunting, fishing, and similar amusements, very often associated with a little rabble of slaves. But we should think it quite practicable in every town and village in the state to establish, if the people were so disposed, a Sunday School in which the principles of religion, unadulterated by any mixture of party zeal, and the maxims of a sound and sober morality, should be inculcated. At the same time many bad habits and injurious associations would be prevented, and our young citizens be prepared for living in a sober, industrious, and honest way. In large towns these institutions are of unspeakable importance. We rejoice that they are beginning to be appreciated in Virginia. In Norfolk, Petersburg, Richmond, Fredericksburg, and Winchester, there is pity felt for the children of the poor and destitute; and schools are established for their gratuitous instruction on the sabbath. We invite the general attention of the citizens to this charity. It is a very cheap one, and at the same time most highly beneficial. Any person may be a member of the society established in the Presbyterian Congregation in this city, and it is believed in any of the others, by paying one dollar per annum. There are at present nearly three hundred children in Rich-

mond, who four months ago spent their sabbaths rambling through the town, imbibing wickedness, by associating with the vilest of our population, who are now employed in learning the elements of religion and morality; and in forming habits of decorum, and order, likely to produce the happiest effects on their future conduct. There are yet many to be brought under this course of discipline. Let men of activity and influence come forward and engage in this cause; let them consent to be members of visiting committees, and, in execution of the command of their Lord, let them "go out into the highways, and hedges, and compel them to come in." Let gentlemen and ladies who have high standing in society go to the schools, and give their countenance and approbation to the teachers who devote their sabbaths to this purpose of useful charity.

And here I must be permitted to tender a tribute of applause to the young gentlemen and ladies who have volunteered in this service. Let us contrast a young man, who devotes five hours of his sabbath to the purpose of instructing six or eight poor outcast, neglected children, goes with them to church, and endeavours to train them to habits of decent and serious attention, as well as to communicate improvement to their minds; and all this without fee or reward, under the impulse of no motive but a desire to do good; let us contrast, I say, a young man pursuing this course of conduct, with him who hires a horse or a hack, and takes a ride to some neighbouring place of resort, or makes a *drive* with a party of young ladies into the country. I appeal to the understanding and conscience to decide which of the two is most worthy of esteem, bids fairest to be a useful citizen, or in fact, at the time, procures for himself the truest and best pleasure.



From the Religious Remembrancer.

DOMESTIC MISSIONS.—NO. II.

Abstract of the First Report of the Board of Missions to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church.—May, 1817.

MR. PHINEAS CAMP, lately a student in the Assembly's Theological Seminary at Princeton, was appointed by the Presbytery of Hudson, to itinerate six weeks as a missionary within their bounds. He laboured in a region of country on the Delaware surrounding the junction of the States of New-York, New-Jersey, and Pennsylvania. The preaching of this young missionary to a people who had been for many years destitute of the stated means of grace, and had not had the sacrament of our Lord's Supper administered among them for eleven years, was eminently blessed by the Great Head of the Church. A powerful work of divine grace began with the commencement of his labours among that people, and was rapidly carried on during the short time he continued to minister to them in holy things. Six individuals were impressed the first Sabbath on which he preached; and before he left them, between *one and two hundred* were awakened to a sense of their need of Christ. Of these a considerable number were rejoicing in their Redeemer, or had obtained a comfortable hope; but, as the sacrament of our Lord's Supper was not administered by Mr.

Camp, the precise number prepared to make a public profession of religion, could not be ascertained.

This people were very urgent in their solicitations to your Missionary to settle among them and become their stated Pastor; but, feeling a preference for a missionary life, he declined: and as they nominally at least belonged to the Dutch Reformed Church, he prudently avoided doing or saying thing to alienate them from their connexion with that sister church, and advised them to choose for their Pastor a minister of their own denomination.

The labours of Mr. Camp, were abundant; for in the course of six weeks, he preached and lectured 46 times.

The Board presume the Assembly will be gratified with the reading of some portions of his interesting journal.

Extracts from the Journal of Mr. Phineas Camp.

Saturday, Sept. 21.—Concluding to preach at *Carpenter's point*, otherwise *Mahackamack*, gave notice on the way that there would be preaching there on the morrow. Arrived at a Mr. V—— F——'s near the church, where I was hospitably entertained, yet not so pleasantly situated as I could wish, as the family talked Dutch continually, except when I was addressed. Was somewhat disheartened on being told that very few persons would assemble on the morrow, on account of the short notice; but still more at the history of the state of this people. It is near 11 years since they had the sacrament administered to them, and during this period, only occasional preaching; latterly scarce any: the summer past, on one Sabbath only. They have had no meetings of their own order for prayer or religious conversation for years; iniquity reigns, and the love of God appears in very few, and in these it is waxed cold.

Sunday, 22.—Went to church with trembling and a too faithless heart, imagining as Satan apparently reigned in the place, and there were no praying people to assist me, that I should preach to closed ears and hardened hearts. Preached A. M. from II. Cor. v. 20. *Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, &c.* to less than a hundred hearers, who though at first noisy and thoughtless, were afterward more solemn. In the afternoon from Luke XIII. 24. *Strive to enter in at the straight gate; for many I say unto you will seek to enter in and shall not be able.* Preached the last sermon extemporaneously, yet with more boldness and freedom than in the forenoon. Observed that the hearers were very attentive, but attributed it to the love of novelty. Returned from church much dejected with a view of my unworthiness. Thought I preached and felt like a child. Was told that the people were pleased with my preaching; but how often is this the case when no apparent good is done? Thought I saw something favourable in a female during conversation with her in the house where I lodged.* Warned her solemnly before retiring to rest.

Tuesday, 24.—Preached in the evening six miles distant in a place called *Peanpack*, part of *Mahackamack* congregation, from Romans

*She has since been under great distress, dating it from this conversation.

XIII. 11. Some persons impressed on the Sabbath came six miles to hear me. The Lord gave me great boldness on this occasion. Every ear appeared to be open, and every mind attentive, though at first they were, as they have usually been, somewhat light in their behaviour. The people hung about me after sermon. Talked with them for some time, till I was weary. One man from Mahak, was much melted down, said he never heard so powerful a sermon as the last one on Sabbath; that he was too great a sinner to be pardoned. He is near *fifty* years old. As he came out of church, he said to one of his neighbours, "what do you think of the sermon?" His neighbour bursting into tears, said, "how can we stand it any longer?" Doubtless the Holy Spirit, and not the sermon pressed upon his soul. Talked solemnly with the family where I preached and lodged, who appeared solemn.

Friday, 27.—Visited a sick woman who was impressed with a sense of her sins, but was ignorant of the way of salvation. Hundreds like her in this region, for want of a teacher, die like the brutes. Preached in the evening at the house of one of the persons impressed on the Sabbath, from Romans XII. 1. *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable, &c.* The house, though large, was full. As I rose to address them, my feelings were of a mingled nature and such as I cannot describe; for it now seemed evident that a revival had commenced in this stupid congregation. Preached with more freedom and less pain of the lungs than I expected. Seldom saw more strict attention paid to preaching. Many wept and lingered behind after sermon. Spoke to them a half hour longer. I perceived many went away much impressed, who were unable or too tired to converse with me. Was cheered to find one New-England woman who said "she had prayed for a revival in this place for four years." But the people seem to have entirely *cast off fear, and restrained prayer before God*. Why is it that the Lord has thus evidently blessed me a novice in his vineyard?

Thursday, Oct. 3.—Recrossed the Delaware, and preached in the evening in Minisink congregation, where I had already preached four times on Sabbath and Monday. The evening, I trust, was a profitable one to hearers and preacher. My text was Romans XII. 1. *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you, &c.* It seemed as if the fear of God fell upon the people. Many pressed after sermon, confessing themselves sinners, enquiring *what they must do to be saved?* One man wept aloud like a child; one woman of 70, and three young women, with infants in their arms, came to enquire. A father and son. They came also earnestly begging me to settle among them as their Pastor. Promised to preach occasionally among them.

Friday, 4.—Returned to Mahackamack 11 miles distant, called on a sick woman, found her rejoicing in her Saviour—perceived her husband, who has been far, very far from all that is good, to be under convictions; while I conversed and prayed with them, he shook and sobbed like a child. This was very refreshing to my soul. Preached

this evening to a large number in church from Matt. XVIII. 2, 3. The strictest attention was paid to the discourse, groans and tears were discernable in several; church being cold could not stay to talk with them.

Sunday, 6—Preached to a large and solemn assembly, from Hosea XIII. 9. *O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself, but in me is thy help;* and from II. Cor. vi. 2. *Behold now is the accepted time, behold, &c.* Tears and anxious looks were visible in many countenances. In the evening preached at a private house much crowded, from Matt. XIII. 16. *But blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear.* The Lord on this occasion put a sharp scythe in my hands, and enabled me to cut close and wide in the hearts of sinners and lukewarm professors, insomuch that one said, "if any thing would offend, this would," and another, "that every word appeared to be sent to the right place." One man acknowledged that the remarks upon careless hearers cut him down. This man is beginning to hope in Christ. After lecture near 20 persons staid to converse: several deeply impressed; one enquired "if it were safe for such a drunkard and blasphemer as he had been to pray unto God."

Monday evening, 7.—Met with a pretty large number for concert of prayer, in compliance with the custom of most churches of Christendom. The people had not heard of such a custom: some knew not what a prayer-meeting was. Addressed them from these words, *Thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.* Had two persons to pray with me. Many were impressed this evening.

Wednesday, 9.—Preached a funeral discourse to a large and solemn assembly from Deut. XXXII. 29. *O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!* Much weeping took place, and great anxiety appeared in the features of many hearers. One woman went away exceedingly burdened in soul: felt that she could not again enter his dwelling; her eyes stream with tears; * she has no peace of mind.* Preached this evening six miles distant at Peanpack to a full house, from John III. 3. *Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.* Among the many who came to me after sermon to seek relief to their burdened consciences, were a man, his wife, and daughter, and an old lady of 70, who trembled under the terror of an alarmed conscience.

Saturday, 12.—Called upon some and heard of others awakened. Visited the sick woman again; she must soon die, but I think though apparently unacquainted with him till lately, will sleep in Jesus. People in the house were moved to tears. Called on a woman who has been remarkably dealt with. She attended on last Sabbath, was suddenly seized with indescribable dread; felt her soul weighed down as with a mountain, was much bewildered, thinks she was impressed by the sermon, but do'nt remember any thing that particularly affected her: recollects nothing but the text. On reading the Bible in the evening, felt the dread with increased weight, but recollects no words nor

* This woman is now exceedingly happy; her case is elsewhere related.

sins that particularly troubled her, could think of nothing but her own amazing agony; she felt it more or less till Wednesday, when she attended a funeral, returned from this in deeper misery. She forgot every thing but her distress—went on Thursday evening to prayer-meeting; approached the house, heard a woman sing; it seemed to her as the voice of an angel: she forgot that she was left alone in the waggon: got into the house she knew not how. Heard little that was said at the meeting: returned home, swooned away in the chair: as she revived was seized with a dreadful fit of shaking, screamed aloud with agony—all this while she felt not the least pain in body—was carried to bed, had there many shaking fits: continued in this state, speechless by turns, yet all the while rational, till toward morning, when the distress gradually abated, and joy *unspeakable* ensued. She can express her feelings now no otherwise than, that “her heart is so transported and light that she *must* fly away.” These words were sweet to her as she revived, “Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” While she related her case to me, her countenance bespoke great peace and ecstacy of mind; her joy now, she says, weighs down her body as much as her agony did before. She is reported to have been a proud, stout-hearted woman: but now none would think her so.—She has wished or prayed that she might experience the *new birth* if it nearly cost her her life; her life was nearly taken.*

Monday, 14.—Called on my way to Peanpack at several houses, and found more newly awakened. Called on an opposer of the gospel, who treated me kindly—answered his objections to the Bible. He fights against his convicted conscience.

Thursday, 17.—Preached opposite Milford this evening in a place called the *Clove* part of Mahackamack congregation, to an assembly of people principally composed of the most ignorant. Discoursed to them in a very plain manner from Rom. v. 8. “*But God commendeth his love to us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*” Talked with several after sermon, who were “*pricked in their consciences.*” The plainer the gospel was preached to them, the more powerful it seemed. It was preached this evening as unto babes. Every word was devoured.

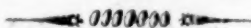
Friday, 18.—Made several calls, found many without learning and without Bibles. Engaged to send them some. The only thing favourable was their readiness to hear the word of God. Preached this evening near yellow church, to an attentive and solemn audience from Luke xy. 17, 18, 19. They enquired, When will you preach to us again? will you not settle with us? They seem ready to *pluck out as it were their right eye, and give it me.*

Friday, 25.—Preached this evening in the *Clove* from John III. 3. Upwards of 20 persons lingered behind to unburden their souls. Heard that now scarce an oath is uttered in all the valley where they lately much abounded. The people *will* ascribe the change to me. I am but the saw in the hands of HIM that shaketh it.

*She was confined to her bed 10 days. Is still very, very happy.

Sunday, 27.—Preached to-day from Samuel iii. 4. "*Let us search and try our ways, and turn again unto the Lord.*" And from Rev. iii. 15, 16. "*I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot, &c.*" The hearers were as usual very serious and solemn. The last sermon was heavy and pointed as to professors, yet none seemed to take offence. In the evening from Matthew xii. 43—45. "*When the unclean spirit hath gone out of a man, &c.*" This lecture was very salutary to many who had hoped too soon. The effect was as I wished. Gave them some of the evidences of grace in the heart to cling to. A large number declared themselves earnest seekers of salvation. My heart rejoiced.

Friday, Nov. 8.—Spent the day in conversing with the sick and the awakened. Preached this evening at Mahackamack from Matthew x. 8, for the purpose of contribution. To-night an opposer of the gospel, with appearances of contrition, presented me with a half dollar. Talked to-night with a young man who, under agony of mind, swooned away in the waggon in which he rode; was taken out lifeless. As he came to, he cried out, "O merciful Father!" continued his prayer; returned home, and begged pardon of his friends for all his profaneness and immorality; now walks correctly.



FOR THE CHRISTIAN MONITOR.

ON INNOCENT AMUSEMENTS.

Mr. Monitor,

As you have charitably undertaken to act the part of a friend and adviser by us all, allow me to put a question to you for our common benefit. What is the true standard by which we well-disposed people may try the innocence of our amusements?

For my own part, I confess when I take a look out of my window, I am quite amazed at the prodigious swarm of *innocent amusements*, as they are called, that are constantly dancing before my eyes. Indeed, if I take our gentry's word for it, I must think that there is no such thing as a criminal diversion in the whole world. But between ourselves, Mr. Monitor, I am really inclined to suspect that they try their amusements by some very false standard indeed. In fact I think I have found out several of these which are so bad that they ought to be exposed. However, as I am no great judge, I will mention them to you, with my objections, and you shall tell us what you think of them.

In the first place then, you must know, a very common standard by which many people seem to try the innocence of their amusements, is simply their agreement with their own conduct. "This amusement is mine, therefore it is innocent." Such is pretty nearly their logic. At least if they have any other rule of reasoning, they certainly keep it very close. But here, you see, the basis of their error is a supposition that they cannot err. For otherwise, it is very clear that the fact of an amusement being theirs could hardly make it innocent; and if you or I were to try our pastimes by such a rule, I fancy we should soon have a pretty noise about it. But to be sure, let them

once succeed in persuading themselves that, like the kings of England, they can do no wrong, the conclusion is very natural, (and very correct too from the premises,) that their favourite diversions are just as harmless as they are delightful. I think, Mr. Monitor, you will easily excuse me from having any thing to do with such a standard as this.

Another standard by which the young and gay are fain to try the innocence of their amusements, is their conformity to the practice of the world, especially the fashionable world. "Surely there is no harm in a game of cards," says Moody, "for all our club agree that it is a very clever way to pass off time." "And I am certain there is none in dancing," says Flirtilla, "for dont all our beaux and belles love it dearly?" Here again, the supposed correctness of the standard depends upon the assumption that the world is always right, and that the beau monde in particular, like his Holiness the Pope, is absolutely infallible. But then, you know, some of us old-fashioned folks are in the habit of reading a certain book, (and a very good one too we think,) which tells us that *the whole world lieth in wickedness*; and, for my part, I am afraid the *beau monde*, as they call it, isn't even the best part of the ball. So you see, I dont like this standard any better than the other.

Another standard by which many decent people seem willing to try the innocence of their amusements, is their agreement with the opinion and practice of those who are thought to be religious. Thus, talk against the Theatre, and you are told that Addison, Young, and Johnson wrote for the stage. Say a word against dancing, and you are reminded that David himself capered before the Ark; (the origin of the *pas seul*, I suppose.) In short speak against any fashionable diversion you please, and I'll answer for it you'll be put down with the example of some mighty good man or other. Now I confess to you, I might perhaps be tempted to choose this standard myself, it gives one such fine elbow-room to do whatever he pleases. But then it strikes me plain enough, that this rule of judging, supposes all pious persons, (and all who pass for such too,) to be absolutely perfect. And yet I read in the book, *there is not a just man upon the earth that doeth good and sinneth not*. I find too that the best saints I have ever known or heard of, confess the deceitfulness of their own hearts, and lament how easy they are to be led away by the manners and fashions of the bad world. So I am afraid—no indeed I can't meddle with such a dangerous standard as this.

But after all, perhaps the most common standard which men set up to try the innocence of their amusements, is their conformity to Nature, or what they call by that name. "Surely," say they, "there can be no sin in following our own inclinations, for they are natural, and therefore innocent; and the Author of our being can't wish us to put fetters upon them, as if they were criminal. Then if our inclinations lead to this and that diversion, why forbid it? Nay it is a piece of surliness to refuse any harmless gratification, which our good mother Nature allows us." Now all this is very pretty to be sure, (at least very convenient;) but unluckily enough, it goes upon the supposition

that human nature is just what it ought to be ; and just what God made it. So then, according to this notion, the "latter end" of the world, like that of Gonzalo's commonwealth, "forgets the beginning;" for it certainly overlooks the capital fact of the fall of man. What is more strange yet, it overlooks the actual state of things before us. Indeed it contradicts at once the testimony of God, the history of past ages, the experience of every day, our eyes, our ears, and our consciences too, if we will own the truth. All these agree in teaching us, that we are born poor, fallen, guilty creatures, make the best of us. In fact nothing but the greatness of our depravity, prevents us from feeling and owning it at once. So now, you see, our Inclinations and Passions have been reduced by Sin from their original allegiance to Virtue, and are always teasing and tempting us to evil. Of course instead of giving them full leave and license to do as they please, we must bind them with all the restraints of Reason and Grace, to keep them within the prison bounds of Duty. What say you, Mr. Monitor, isn't it so indeed? Then what shall we do with such a sorry standard as this?

In short, Mr. Monitor, I think for myself there is no trusting to any of these standards which men use, for they are all false and dangerous enough. If you think so too, perhaps you may find it worth your while to furnish us with some true standard upon this subject; that is if you know of any. In the mean time, till I hear from you, (and perhaps afterwards too,) I believe I shall continue to govern myself by that good old book commonly called the Bible.

With best respects to all your readers, I am, good Mr. Monitor,
Your faithful friend, WILL, STEADY.

— ❦ —
FOR THE CHRISTIAN MONITOR.

HYMN.—REV. XIV. 13.

How sadly-sweet their slumbers are,
Who die in Christ the Lord!
They rest from all their toil and care,
And win the great reward.

Their works in sacred incense rise,
Before the Father's throne:
Their Priest presents his sacrifice,
And Heav'n is all their own.

— ❦ —
THE SEASONS.

THE readers of the Monitor may recollect that some months past, an article was introduced into our paper under this head; and that then the prospect before us was one of scarcity and suffering.—A general gloom had overspread the country. Many, to say the least, were anxious as to the means of subsistence for themselves, and those dependent on them. It was often remarked, "Should it please providence to appoint disastrous seasons for another year, our case will be deplorable indeed." The fears of the people were highly excited.—Of this we had evidence in various ways. But none struck my mind

more forcibly than the frequent appearance in Newspapers, from almost all parts of the country, of articles headed "*Phenomena!*" "*Omens!*" "*Extraordinary Occurrences!*" &c. This evinced the excitement of superstitious apprehensions not at all creditable, as I thought, to a Christian people. But such perhaps, has always been the case, and always will be in times of general disquiet and alarm, until the people shall learn to regulate their feelings and conduct by that Blessed Book which among innumerable other salutary precepts forbids us to "*learn the way of the heathen, and to be dismayed at the signs of heaven.*"

But the present occasion of these fears has passed away. A great change in the seasons has taken place. Last year our heavens were as brass, and our earth as iron; the rain and dew were withheld in their season; and our stay of bread and water was not sure. At the commencement of the present season too every thing wore a gloomy aspect, and there was a prospect of the full verification of all our fears. A little insect, of very contemptible appearance, threatened to defeat the plans, and to cut off the hopes of the nation. Man with all his boasted wisdom, with all his high powers, his varied resources, his might and his prowess, stood confounded and alarmed in the presence of the Hessian Fly! When full proof was given of our imbecillity, and the conviction wrought deep despondency in almost every bosom, then it pleased the Ruler of nature to open the cisterns of the sky, and pour down copious showers on the earth. He passed over our land and all his paths dropped fatness. New powers of production seemed to be communicated to the soil, and it teemed with abundance. Grasses, fruits, corn, every thing pleasant to the eye, and good for food flourished, and continue to flourish, with the promise of exuberant supplies for man and beast. The vallies pour forth their fruitfulness, and even the high and thirsty ridges wave with corn—This is a change indeed!

A great change too has taken place in the feelings of the people. They have forgotten their fears—perhaps too their dependence on Divine Providence; and it may be, while they see their extensive fields clothed in the deepest green, and laughing with abundance, are indulging feelings similar to those which Nebuchadnezzar expressed when he stood on a lofty tower, and surveyed the great Babylon which he had builded—Yet let it be known that we are still dependent. A long drought in August, great floods of rain, tempestuous winds, or storms of hail might destroy many of the husbandman's hopes, and even now cut short the supplies of the year. All these things are at the bidding and under the control of that Almighty Being whom we are so apt to forget, and against whom we are so prone to sin. It may please him in execution of his purposes of wisdom, and benevolence, to bring us low; to make us permanently feel how weak, how helpless we are in ourselves; and thus cause us habitually to look to him for daily bread, and sincerely to thank him for every favour bestowed.

It ought not to be understood that the writer is predicting evil.—The folly of this rashness has so often been manifested by a falsifica-

tion of such predictions, that it is wonderful men are not cured of the propensity. The only object in view is to produce a deep, practical, conviction of our dependence on God for every thing. It is true that ordinarily such are our climate and seasons, that we have harvest at least half the year; and from May until November are reaping the fruits of the earth—Yet early and late frosts, and the withholding of the early and latter rain, might produce want of bread with all its wretchedness. And I will add; it is true that we live under a happy form of government, and enjoy the most distinguishing privileges; but we may abuse and undervalue them; and be brought to bend our necks to the iron yoke of despotism—We live in a land of Gospel light; but we may so prefer our own worldly profit to the blessings of revealed truth, that our candlestick may be removed from our altar, and we be left to all the darkness and misery of Infidelity or false religion. All these things are possible, yet we apprehend them not. All this shows our dependence on Heaven, but we lay it not to heart. Many indeed, make the acknowledgement in general terms; but they live as though they were their own, and had all needful power in their hands. A genuine sense of dependence produces gratitude; acknowledges our responsibility to him who gives us all things liberally to enjoy; and at least honestly endeavours to please him. But the people of this country, living more at ease than any in the world, fed on the finest of the wheat, accumulating wealth with unexampled rapidity, enjoying the most perfect protection of their rights and privileges, and rioting, I may say, amidst the profusion of heavenly gifts, forget their obligations to God, and neglect their truest and best interests. Our true interest is to cultivate our own understandings and hearts, and to promote knowledge, virtue and piety among others, by supporting the institutions of learning and religion in the land. But, while individuals manifest remarkable liberality in this way, the general disposition is to seek private gain, and let the public good shift for itself. Be the season scarce or plentiful; the times hard or favourable, it is all the same. Money is the god of our idolatry, the chief object of our pursuit.

O cives, cives, quærenda pecunia primum

Virtus post nummos.

Thus exclaimed the Roman Poet; and gave no juster representation of his own times, than of ours. Neither war, nor sickness, nor scarcity represses the ardour of our desires, nor mitigates "The rage canine of dying rich." Remonstrances, reasonings, expostulations, are tried in vain. It has occurred to me that amidst all these fruitless attempts to give another direction to the pursuits and purposes of the people, a new method might be adopted not only to convince their understandings but to reach their feelings and alter their conduct. It is fearlessly affirmed then, that vice and folly are much *dearer* than virtue; and false religion than Christianity. To evince this, let it be considered that for every oath a man swears, for every time he gets drunk, he is under obligation to pay to the State the sum of five shillings; that for every act of uncleanness he is bound to pay twenty dollars; and that by gambling he incurs, a much higher forfeiture.

It is true that these debts are not often collected—But that is because the officers of justice and the peace are much more intent to exact what is their own; than what the law claims for the public. Yet surely a citizen is bound to pay what the law of his country says he must pay. And on this principle beyond a doubt, swearing and drunkenness, lewdness and gambling, are much dearer, than words of kindness, than temperance, chastity, and honest industry—But we shall not leave the matter on this ground. In looking over the accounts of some very sober, decent and respectable families, one is reminded of the account found by Prince Henry in the pocket of Falstaff, in which he was charged with a pennyworth of bread, and forty shillings worth of sack. Let almost any house-keeper in the State compare at the close of the year the amount of his charities, with that of the account current for wine and spirits; and in many, very many cases the proportion will be that of a penny to forty shillings. Now the *habitual use* of any strong drink is a material injury; and ought therefore to be considered a vice—To say the least of it, it is egregious folly.—For if it is not foolish to subtract from our means of doing good, and injure our own health, and shorten our own lives, for the temporary gratification afforded by strong drink, then the distinction between wisdom and folly is an empty name. I do believe that this custom costs the people of Virginia more than the amount of their taxes, their charities, and their contributions made for the support of the gospel at home and abroad, all added together. But if to this we annex all the cost of every other species of folly and vice, such as superfluous and extravagant ornaments of persons and houses, luxurious living, litigations about trifles, &c. &c. how enormously will the aggregate surpass our expenditures for charity, for religion, for learning! Then let it be understood by us, as lovers of money, that vice and folly *cost us much more* than virtue and religion. I do not perceive how this conclusion can be resisted, nor in what way the proper effect of the argument can be prevented, unless it be said that, as it is the prerogative of freemen to do as they please, we will manifest our freedom, and maintain it, by casting off the restraints of virtue and piety—Liberty cannot be bought at a price too high! To this I have, and can have nothing to answer; only I subjoin a quotation from a favourite poet.

He is a freeman whom the truth makes free
And all are slaves besides.

But it was said above, that Christianity is cheaper than any false religion. It is I think quite easy to prove this by actual calculation. Previously however it would be proper to remark, that experience has shown most decisively that civil society cannot exist without religion. If it could, we might exercise a most laudable spirit of economy, and totally free ourselves from all expenses of this sort: But *it cannot* under any form of government; and least of all in a republic, where authority is vested in the laws, and virtue in the citizens is requisite for their execution. As *prudent* men then, and good patriots it becomes us to calculate how we can promote the welfare and security of the State, and get our souls saved, on the cheapest terms!

In the statement which will be offered, I shall not take advantage of the known fact, that in the present mode of management, many people, perhaps the majority in the State, get full as much religion as they want at no expense at all. It is notorious, that, with a few exceptions, where a decent support is afforded by the liberality of particular congregations, ministers of the gospel "have to labour for nothing and find themselves." I shall suppose that every clergyman in the State receives enough from the people for a moderate support considering the unavoidable expenses of the place in which he lives. Nay I will make the extravagant supposition that a thousand preachers of the gospel were for the benefit of the people of Virginia, receiving annually from their liberality an average of a thousand dollars per annum. This would be just one million a year. Now on this supposition, I will undertake to show that Christianity would be a cheaper religion to us than any other that has ever been supported for the benefit of *civil* society. *Savages*, it is granted have in this respect the advantage of all others; and perhaps this is the reason why some great philosophical economists have been so loud in their praises of savage life. But as it is not likely that the present generation will throw off their old habits and notions and fraternize with Indians, it is hardly worth while to dwell upon this idea.

In adducing proofs of the position that has been laid down, it cannot be necessary to advert to more than a few plain facts, derived from the history of the polished nations of Antiquity. The temple, then, of Diana at Ephesus; of The Sun at Palmyra; or the Pantheon at Rome, there is no doubt cost more, by a hundred times, than all the churches that have ever been built in Virginia from the settlement of the Colony down to the present day. These were certainly extraordinary buildings—but every where the temples were most costly edifices. Again, we read very frequently of hecatombs, that is offerings of a hundred oxen at a time! Now it must occur to every one, that if oxen were cheap at Athens or Rome, living must have been cheap also; and if beef were as high as it is among us, a single offering of this kind, must have cost at least five thousand dollars!!! Besides, the daily oblations were in such numbers as to afford subsistence to a great multitude of higher and lower priests with their servants, and officers, and concubines, and children. In addition to this, there were multitudes of gods and goddesses, who all had their statues wrought of the finest marble, as well as their magnificent temples. Let a man consider the immense expenses that all this would require, and he will easily believe with me that heathenism is vastly more expensive than Christianity.

But it may be asked, what has all this to do with the subject at the head of this article? I answer, that in the present project of abundance, when the people are thinking of pulling down their barns and building greater for the keeping of their fruits and their goods; it would be well for them to consider what they have it in their power to do for the promotion of the general welfare; for the support and extension of that religion which is at once the cheapest and the most efficient.